As an American involved in IT development since 1971, as a military conscript, and ever since, in various roles, I support FCC regulation of the internet -with some caveats.

The Internet is now the highest, most heavily trafficked and most advanced form of "communication" in America. It has been absurd to "pretend" otherwise, that the Internet does not fall within the other telecommunications media (radio, television, telephone). In fact, few doubt in the future, the Internet will be the primary vehicle for all three of those "twentieth century broadcast media".

We have reached a point in America where the Internet consumer needs some protection, if science, technology and society are to develop to their fullest measure. The "future of the Internet" already exists in western Europe, where the greatest benefit has freed professionals from physical transport to "workplaces". This serves the entire ecosphere, and is a necessary evolution if America is to maintain its lead (and reap the same social/environmental benefits).

However, we already see severe inequities in American Internet development, due to unregulated ISPs. While the "future exists already" throughout most of Western Europe, it is totally absent in much of America. Broadband exists at sufficient rates and quality throughout most regions of the Northeast and the far west. But there is a vast empty "electronic wasteland" or "broadband frontier" between the northeast and West coasts. Literally from any direction or location in New York, even its most rural, one can access broadband services at a fair rate. Yet just 50 miles outside of Midwestern cities like Saint Louis or Tucson, one can have difficulty accessing the internet by any means beside archaic telephone modem connections. Like the advent of CATV services in the late 20th century, large Internet service providers neglect the areas with lower population density (thus less profitability). This inequity will only increase, without regulation. And this inequity retards the development and participation of society within this frontier.

So there must be some regulation, not only to mandate the quality, but the accessibility of internet services.

Yet, there is a great difference between the Internet and older broadcast media. A difference that must be respected and preserved at all times: Freedom. Unlike TV or Radio, the internet possesses since its inception, a covenant of free speech that supersedes all other forms of telecommunications. There is need for censorship on public airwaves, yet we all know by China's example, any censorship of internet CONTENT -is tyranny.

There are no "words" that are illegal on the internet. Period. And there must never be any "words" that are forbidden, blocked, or censored, no matter how extreme. There exists need for sensible policing of "harmful actions" on the internet (child pornography, snuff films, terrorist advocacy, for example). But the current religious infiltration between church and state in general society cannot ever be

permitted on the Internet. Internet regulation must never interfere with victim-less content deemed "unfit" by moral crusaders. Internet regulation must never subvert privacy.

Therefore, any entry of the FCC into Internet regulation must begin with, and never violate, a "user Bill of Rights" that defines these caveats clearly -and completely without any vague terminology whatsoever. There must not be any possible compromise, no room for local "interpretation" that violates privacy -or advocates censorship. Not even for the sake of "children". Society recognizes the need for parents and police to restrict 10-year-old children from driving motor vehicles. We hold any parent who gives car keys to a child accountable for the damage. The same (serious) responsibility falls on society to restrict child use on the Internet. There is no room for regulated "PG" ratings of internet content. This would be totally unacceptable. Schools, homes and libraries must instead, police themselves by restricting access to appropriate content. This is easy to do now that vital (and educational) sites like Wikipedia.org have their own page IDs to help decide which pages within their archives are appropriate for children. But we must never restrict the content of the internet for the sake of children. Like automobiles and interstate highways, we "built the Internet for adults". Children are allowed on the interstate -only in the "back seat". Thusly, the Internet must never be demeaned by bringing it down to the (useless) level of a child.

America's forefathers, philosophers and scholars explained this Internet caveat best, in their true genius, with the quote: "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend with my life, your right to say it".

Put these caveats "up front" in FCC ISP regulations, "Reclassify" the Internet as telecommunications, where it belongs, then go after the greedy access purveyors that "sentence rural Americans to the twentieth century" while denser-populated areas advance.

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As a vital postscript, I must add another caveat. The Internet, in one catastrophic event, has already been "regulated" by the FCC. This was a disaster. During the Bush administration, Colon Powell's son, Michael was appointed to the FCC board, just in time to vote on the merger of AOL-Time Warner. This decision affected the develoment of the internet, negatively. AOL's model of the Internet was already antiquated, so this merger actually retarded technological development by subsidizing a business that "should have expired long ago". The FCC's decision also, at the moment of the AOL/Time Warner vote, increased the value of Colon Powell's AOL stock, by over 4.5 million dollars. That was "politics" interfering with the Internet. This should also have been recognized as a CRIME under existing insider trading FTC regulations. We in IT have not forgot this, and never will. By subsidizing a dying archaic model in an otherwise rapidly-developing industry, the FCC actually

prolonged the use of conventional analog modem technology (and thus, retarded broadband development) for nearly a decade. Politics and greed must never impede the Internet again!